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*"It's time to put politics aside and allow Minnesotans to move forward"*

**Washington, DC** - As the state budget forecast revealed a record \$6.2 billion deficit, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) today called on Republican candidate for Governor Tom Emmer to put the interests of Minnesota taxpayers ahead of his partisan interests and end his challenge to the results of the 2010 election.

"Minnesota families are hurting and our state and federal budgets are in crisis," said Congresswoman McCollum. "I appeal to Tom Emmer's commitment to public service and urge him and his Republican colleagues to stop wasting tax dollars on what is clearly a futile, if not frivolous attempt to delay the inevitable results of this election. It's time to put politics aside and allow Minnesotans to move forward."

Senator Dayton's nearly 9,000 vote lead is 30 times larger than Senator Franken's 2008 margin of victory. More than 93% of Minnesota's votes have been recounted at taxpayer expense and the lead remains so large, that it's statistically impossible for Tom Emmer to come close to closing the gap in votes.

While figures on cost of the 2010 recount are not yet available, a Pew study of the 2008 Minnesota senate recount estimates that the state's 87 counties spent, on average, more than 15 cents per ballot on the manual recount, with total costs surpassing \$460,000.

Following the 2008 Minnesota recount, state election reforms passed into law made frivolous ballot challenges illegal. Ramsey County election manager Joe Mansky recently stated in the Star Tribune that he estimates only about 10 percent of all the early challenges made by Emmer representatives in Ramsey County are solid, another third could be legitimately argued in front of the Canvassing Board and the rest will almost certainly be ruled out of by the board.

"These frivolous GOP challenges will not change the outcome of this election," said McCollum. "Republicans are making a mockery of our electoral system at taxpayer expense - a particular burden on our counties and local officials at a time when they are being forced to make painful

cuts that will be felt by families and communities across Minnesota."

"Moving Minnesota and our nation forward in the face of economic challenges and severe budget shortfalls requires all partners at the table, including our next governor, to meet the challenges facing Minnesota families."

"We have a job to do - to work for the people of Minnesota - and I look forward to working with Mark Dayton as our next governor," said McCollum.

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